

Christ Our Physician

FATHER CARR, C.S.S.R.

From the Perth "Record," March 28, 1927

They that are whole need not the physician; but they that are sick (Luke, v, 31).

OUR LORD has given Himself many titles to bring home to us all He meant to be and to do for humanity; but I doubt if there be any so full of meaning as the one He assumes in the words of my text: He is our physician, our doctor, our healer.

A physician He was indeed for many a bodily sufferer during His public career, and the title at once rehearses many a lovely and touching scene. Again we find ourselves in the throngs that pressed round Jesus as He walked about doing good along the country roads or through the city streets. Again are we startled by the loud appeal: "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" coming from some stricken one. Now it is a sightless beggar by the wayside, now a leprous outcast, standing afar off, tainting the air about him and sending the hoarse cry of distress over the surging multitude; now it is the mute appeal of a childless widow, weeping for her lost and only one. Again we halt with Jesus. Again the expectant hush falls upon us. Again we watch the Physician at His work and glorify God as we see the blind eyes open, and the scales of the hideous leprosy fall away, and the dead youth rise and rush to his mother's arms.

But, though we read that He went about "healing all manner of sickness and every infirmity among the people" (Matt. iv, 23), though indeed He was a healer to man's broken and agonizing frame, yet He was, above all, the Physician of the soul, the healer of the heart. Not surely to open a dumb mouth or give life to a withered hand, not to cleanse the rotting flesh, not even to wrench the very dead from death, did He leave the glory and peace of His Father's bosom for the pain and shame of a manger and

a cross. Not merely to lengthen by a few fleeting days the span of our troubled life did He "empty himself and take the form of a servant," to die at last a felon's death. No, it was the soul of man, its Maker's image and immortal, that was sick, and of the soul is He first of all Physician. Let us examine His qualifications and see what we must do if we wish to be the patients of our Divine Doctor.

HIS QUALIFICATIONS: KNOWLEDGE

To begin with, a good doctor must know much. For years the human body, the hundred ills that flesh is heir to, and their possible remedies, must be his study. This knowledge he must know how to apply to the individual patient who presents himself—and the knowledge and the skill of the best doctor may not be equal to a given case.

Now who knew the soul of man better than the Divine Physician? Who knows the intricacies of a machine better than the inventor of it, the proportions of a building better than its architect? And who knows the soul better than the God who fashioned it? "Thou only knowest the hearts of the children of men" (2 Par. vi, 30). He knows the soul—its littleness and its greatness, its frailty and its strength, its blindness and the immensity of its vision, its wayward earthly whims and the immortal longings of its own true self. No thought of man's mind, no stir of his heart is hid from Him, and He knows the souls of all as the soul of one, and the soul of one as He knows the souls of all.

No study did this Physician need before practising: "He needed not that any should give testimony of man, for He knew what was in man" (John, ii, 25). With Him there was no experimenting. With unerring penetration He diagnosed each case, and with a sureness of touch no surgeon ever had He went straight to the sore spot in the heart of sick humanity, and from the pharmacy of His infinite wisdom the remedy was drawn.

He turns on the scribes, who were shocked at the idea to His forgiving sin, and "seeing their thoughts," lays bare the canker of their envious hearts. A palsied man is brought to Him. He looks pityingly on his trembling frame, but He looks deeper: He goes to the root of the mischief, and bidding him arise, says: "Thy sins are forgiven thee" (Matt. ix, 2).

HIS TACT

And with what tact and gentleness He did His work! It is not enough for a physician to know what to do; he must know how to do it; his manner may spoil his work. Let us watch Jesus with one of His patients.

There was a sick soul in Samaria—a woman living in great sin. Unsummoned and unknown, the Physician seeks out the patient. He had gone a long way and, wearied with His journey, He sat down by Jacob's Well. It was midday, and the heat was very great. A woman approached to draw water, and quite naturally He asked her for a drink. Seeing that He was a member of a hostile race, she wondered. By the Divine charm of His speech and ways, Jesus led her to soften towards Him, and at last to look upon Him as a superior Being. He soon showed her that He was such, for He said suddenly: "Go, call thy husband, and come hither." The woman answered and said: "I have no husband." Jesus said to her: "Thou hast said well. I have no husband. For thou hast had five husbands: and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband. This thou hast said truly" (John, iv, 16-18).

What tact is here! The Physician does not handle roughly this sinful heart by upbraiding her for her life of crime. Such is not His way. He chats with her, requests the courtesy of a drink of water, and in the most natural way in the world asks her to call her husband, knowing she has no lawful one. Then, when the poor sinner, without meaning to give herself away, says she has no husband, He praises her for telling the truth, and thus adroitly draws from her a painless confession of her guilt—the first and hardest operation in her cure.

HIS SELF-SACRIFICE

But there is something else in this Physician that puts Him infinitely above all others. Jesus cures His patients at His own tremendous cost. From the unmeasured heights of His glory, from the awful recesses of His Godhead, did He come and sit by the bedside of humanity—His glory dimmed lest it should hurt the sufferer's eyes, the stained and tattered garment of our flesh thrown over Him, lest His greatness should frighten and overawe. Down He

came with all His power and love to watch by the patient and nurse him back to life. He did more: medicine that was to heal the patient He took Himself, though He needed it not and it was very, very bitter. And so He slept His first sleep in a stable, and was struck and spat upon, and in a fool's guise made sport for a rabble—and all to bring down our inflated pride. "And if this medicine does not cure our pride," says St. Augustine, "I know not what can." And so, too, He was poor and "had not whereon to lay His head," and was stripped of all things, just to cure our hankering after this world's goods, that through the medicine of His poverty we might be rich eternally. And so, too, He was scourged, that "by His stripes" the impurities of our flesh "might be healed" (1 Pet. ii, 24); and so He was "thought as it were a leper" (Is. iii, 4), to cleanse us from our leprosy. Truly did the Prophet say to Him: "He was bruised for our sins . . . and by his bruises we are healed" (Is. liii, 5).

He did more. The poor human patient was aflame with many fevers; the tide of many passions ran hot and high within him. And so the Physician gave what would quench them—the draught of His own blood, saying: "My blood is drink indeed" (John vi, 46). The poor patient was very, very weak and hungered for a food that would strengthen him to rise and go his heavenward way. Earth could not give it; and then the Divine Physician did a wondrous thing: He "blessed and broke and said: Take ye and eat. This is my body" (Matt. xxvi, 26). He did more still. He whose love alone could do it: He died that His patient might live. Oh, truly greater love than this no physician ever had for his patient, that the physician lay down his life for him. Such is the Physician of our soul. What must we do to be cured by Him?

CONDITIONS OF CURE: RECOGNIZE OUR MALADY

We must see our sins: else we are hopeless. The world is drifting more and more into a forgetfulness of what sin really is. God is unseen and the soul is unseen, and men, growing more and more material, reckon their losses and their gains by what they can see with their eyes and weigh and measure with their hands. Now sin, the hidden rupture with a hidden God, is not perceived by the senses;

but its consequences often are, and it is the consequences of their evil deeds, and not the evil deeds themselves, that are but too often in the eyes of men the measure of their guilt. Sin is becoming more and more an offense against society rather than an offense against God, a breach of good manners rather than a breach of good morals, an infringement of the acknowledged civilities of life rather than a violation of the Ten Commandments.

Thus the morality of a country, of a town, of a parish, is now calculated in figures: we total up the living fruits of sin and applaud or censure accordingly—forgetting the unnumbered deeds of darkness that have no such fruits, forgetting that impurity is none the less impure for being cunning and scientific in its methods. The drinking of the man who makes a scene in the public street is a crime; the drinking of the man who hides his indulgence in his home and makes that home a hell is a pardonable weakness. The successful liar is a clever man; alone the man who is caught in his lying is a liar. Listen to this piece of advice given by a certain well-known member of the Bar to a young man beginning his legal career: "My dear young friend, never swear in a court of justice to anything that can be proved to be false by a document in the possession of your opponent; for that would be a lie." In other words, if it cannot be proved to be false, it is no lie.

There are people nowadays who seem to think that that alone is sinful which the world witnesses and condemns, and that earth and not heaven is the arbiter of right and wrong. They are ready to look horror on hearing of a public scandal, as the Pharisees were of old; but like them they are "whited sepulchers . . . full of dead men's bones and of all filthiness" (Matt. xxiii, 27). Yes, many are sick and think they are whole; leprous and fancy they are clean; many there are to whom the Prophet could say: "Woe to you that call evil good, and good evil" (Is. v, 20). We must bear in mind that sin is sin precisely because God thinks it so, and we must gauge our guilt and diagnose the ailments of our soul, not with the book of the world's etiquette in our hands, but the fixed and unerring code of the Gospel.

KNOW WHERE TO APPLY FOR CURE

But it is not enough to know our ailments; we must know where to go for their cure. Many would be cured; but, alas! they go to the wrong doctor; they seek a remedy in themselves. Some try to reason themselves out of their vices. For instance, the slave of drink will face himself with lurid pictures of his own wretchedness—his health shattered, his business gone to ruin, his worldly prospects blasted—and in sheer anger with himself he will take pledges that he will not long keep. He has gone to the wrong doctor. The slave to impure vice will appeal time and again to what he calls his will power and try to goad that poor weak will of his into new activity; and he thinks, poor fool, that because he feels a passing current of vitality shoot through him that he is radically cured. No, for he too has gone to the wrong doctor. Such people forget that behind all their resolutions must be the driving power of God's grace, which alone the Divine Physician can compound and which He dispenses through prayer and the Sacraments.

And the folly we see in individuals we see in the world at large. The nations are sick with the most monstrous complications of disorders: they are blind to the things of eternity, deaf to the voice of God, leprous with impurity, swollen with an all-sufficing pride, gnawed by the cancer of social unrest, burning with the fever of their racial hates. Oh, where is the physician learned and skilled enough to heal?

It is almost amusing to hear statesmen, the would-be doctors of the world, prescribing for its ills and forecasting a "new earth." If the nations put themselves in the hands of the Divine Physician, then we may hope for a new and better earth, for a world "fit for heroes to live in," but not otherwise, most certainly not otherwise. Otherwise ambition will put forth its grasping hand again, and jealousy will raise its uneasy head, and smouldering hatred will blaze forth anew, and deceit will resume its role in the intercourse between peoples, and hell and all that hell stands for will come once more into its own. Unless Christ's policy be adopted, the policy of statesmen will come to naught; unless He who made the world and redeemed it presides at its council boards, leagues and conferences may

meet and legislate against disorder and war till their heads ache, but they will meet and legislate in vain; unless Christian peoples are at peace with Christ, a conclusive peace amongst themselves must ever be the wildest dream.

WE MUST WANT TO BE CURED

Yet one thing more is needed for our cure. We find it suggested in the question Our Lord put to the infirm man who had been languishing for thirty-eight years by the miraculous pool: "Wilt thou be made whole?" (John, v, 6). Do we want Our Lord to heal us? Do we want to be rid of our sins? Some of us do not; for that would mean renouncing certain pet ideas, certain pleasures, enduring certain pains, and we must honestly admit that we do not want our cure.

Others of us think we want our cure, and our wanting is nothing but an idle wish. We should like to be cured, if we had not to pay for our cure in sacrifice; we try to amend, but when we find the trying too hard, we stop trying; we even pray for our cure, but our prayers is little more than a bargaining with God. For years the great Augustine, entangled in the meshes of impure love, prayed for purity, and for years he was not heard. Listen to his words: "I, miserable young man, even in the very outset of my youth, had entreated chastity of Thee, and had said: 'Give me chastity, but not yet,' *da mihi castitatem, sed non modo*, for I feared lest Thou shouldst hear me soon and soon deliver me from the disease of concupiscence, which I desired to have satisfied rather than extinguished." It was only when Augustine prayed with his heart as well as with his lips that he was cured and was changed from a great sinner into one of God's greatest saints. Oh, had we really willed to be rid of some spiritual disease, long since had our Physician healed us. "We should have cured Babylon," said God of old, "but she is not healed" (Jer. li, 9). No, because Babylon would not be cured. To how many a sick soul could not Jesus say as much!

BE READY TO OBEY OUR PHYSICIAN

But we must remember that if we sincerely wish to reach an end we must sincerely wish to take the means, and if we sincerely wish Our Physician to heal our ills

we must be sincerely willing to carry out His prescriptions, to take His medicine, even to undergo operations He may deem necessary. Else our wishes are in vain and our going to Him is a sham. His remedies may be drastic at times; they may mean the amputation of a right hand, the plucking out of a right eye—the separation from what is the root and occasion of the evil. He knows what is best and what is necessary, and let us submit. Hear His own words: “It is expedient for thee that one of thy members should perish, rather than that thy whole body be cast into hell” (Matt. v, 29).

Here then is this wondrous Physician, who knows His patients and their ills as only a God can know them, whose skill no ailment can baffle, whose touch is infinitely gentle, and Who has given of His own Divine best to compound a remedy. If there be sick souls amongst us, let us first recognize humbly that we are sick; let us then remember where the right Physician dwells and where His medicines are dispensed; let us yearn for our cure; and then, bracing ourselves up to do whatever He may prescribe, let us go without delay and say to Him what the two sisters said long ago of their brother: “Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick” (John, xi, 3). The words will not be spoken in vain.

The Sacred Heart of Jesus

An editorial from the “Catholic Register,” June, 1927

AS this month is dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus many of our Catholic papers will, no doubt, have something to say on this subject, a subject of perennial interest and solemn importance, which can be viewed from various aspects and still be found inexhaustible in the thoughts that it suggests. The devotion to the Sacred Heart is of comparatively recent date, having had its origin, as we know, in a series of revelations vouchsafed by God, in 1637-1675, to Margaret Mary Alacoque, a simple nun of Paray, but since raised to the honors of the altar; and hence on account of its novelty, it met with much opposition at the start. It was denounced as new, a charge that was true, in a certain sense, for never before had the devo-

tion been put into form and popularized as it was then done; but the spirit of the devotion had long been familiar to the Saints. In fact from the time of the Apostles, when St. John, the beloved disciple of Our Lord, leaned on His bosom at the Last Supper, showing how intensely he realized the great love of Our Saviour for mankind and especially for him and how much he loved his Master in return, there has always been in the Church a special devotion to the Person of Our Lord inspired by the love of God who so loved the world as to give it His only begotten Son, and the love of Jesus who has so loved us as to deliver Himself up for us.

Christianity is pre-eminently a religion of love. The Apostles preached Christ Crucified; they called on men to believe, hope, and place their affections in the Saviour who had come and gone; and the moral instrument by which they persuaded them to do so, was a description of the life, character, mission, and power of that Saviour, a promise of His invisible presence and protection here, and of the Vision and Fruition of Him hereafter. From first to last to Christians, as to Abraham, He Himself was the center and fulness of the dispensation. The Apostles by their preaching imprinted on the minds of their hearers so vividly the image of their Saviour, that their converts, although they had not seen Him, yet believed in Him and loved Him and rejoiced. They felt that it was the image of Him who fulfils the one great need of human nature, the Healer of its wounds, the Physician of the soul. This image it was which both created faith and then rewarded it. And then when it came to their turn to die for their faith, it was the Image of that Divine Saviour that sustained them and consoled them in their death and made them even feel that it was an acceptable service to Him who loved them, to confess with courage and to suffer with dignity. When St. Ignatius, the disciple of the Apostles, was sent all the way from Antioch to Rome to be devoured by the beasts in the amphitheatre, he wrote letters, as he traveled, to various Christian Churches, and among others to his Roman brethren, among whom he was to suffer. They show how the image of that Divine King, who had been promised from the beginning, was the living principle of his firm resolve and absolute determination to be martyred. He would even provoke and coax and compel the wild

beasts, he said, to devour him quickly, should they be unwilling to do so; for he knew what was to be his gain. "Let the tortures of the devil all assail me, if I do but gain Christ Jesus." "I write to you, still alive, but longing to die. My Love is crucified! I have no taste for perishable food. I long for God's Bread, heavenly Bread, Bread of Life, which is the Flesh of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. I long for God's draught, His Blood, which is Love without corruption, and Life for evermore."

Such was the ardent spirit, and the living faith on which it was founded, of the early Christians in those terrible days of persecution. In subsequent ages much of this ardor had cooled down, although it was kept in evidence in the lives and the writings of the Saints who practised devotion, in some form or other, founded on the love of Christ for mankind. It is related in the vision of St. Gertrude, on the feast of St. John the Evangelist, that being allowed to rest her head near the wound in the Saviour's side, she heard the beating of the Divine Heart, and she asked St. John, if, on the night of the Last Supper, he too had felt these delightful pulsations, why he had never spoken of the fact. John replied that this revelation had been reserved for subsequent ages, when the world, having grown cold, would have need of it to rekindle its love.

When, then, at different periods, the love of God ceased more or less to be the main-spring which regulated the lives of Christians in general, efforts were made in pulpit and in writing to instil a holy dread of hell and eternal punishment in the Faithful by vivid descriptions of the future punishment reserved for the wicked in the next world, so that men may be converted from their sins to the practice of virtue and a religious life. This is still necessary nowadays in many cases; and hence we are often told by non-Catholics that religion is made for us a religion of fear rather than one of love—which, as we know, is the reverse of our ideal of what Christianity really is. They do not seem to know that we fully realize that no temper of mind is acceptable in the Divine Presence without love; that it is love which makes Christian fear differ from servile dread, and true faith differ from the faith of devils; and yet, as the Book of Proverbs says: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom"; that we know also that in the beginning of the religious life, fear is the prominent evangeli-

cal grace, and love is but latent in fear, and has in course of time to be developed out of what seems its contradictory; and that then, when it is developed, it takes the prominent place which fear held before, yet protecting not superseding it. Love is added, not fear removed, and the mind is but perfected in grace by what seems a revolution. "They that sow in tears reap in joy"; yet afterwards still they are "sorrowful" though "always rejoicing."

And then there came the Protestant Reformation which introduced into the world a spirit of revolt which has been slowly, but surely, undermining all belief, and has led to the Rationalism of our own day. One by one Catholic doctrines have been repudiated, and belief in hell is one of them that has been dying out in all classes professing to be Christian, outside the Catholic Church, since the so-called Reformation. The doctrine of eternal punishment would seem only to anger the multitude in the large towns and to make them blasphemous. And as this process of disintegration has been going on for the last four centuries from the very beginning of Protestantism, it was natural that the spirit which has led to unbelief should affect Catholics who were much in contact with it, so much so that the element of the fear of God as a means for reclaiming sinners has become less effective in course of time.

But it has pleased God, who has promised to be to the end of time with his Church and has always found means to meet the exigencies of the times, to provide such a means in the century following the Reformation, through a devotion to His Sacred Heart, revealed, as we said, to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, that should appeal to the minds of men in a more effectual and persuasive way than any other devotion has done before it; that should appeal to their hearts through that symbol of His love for them; that should make them realize what that love has done, how intense it must have been when He found it necessary to take human nature and to lay down His life for them to redeem them from their fallen state and open the gates of Heaven for them; so that, by means of such loving appeal, they may be induced to return love for love, and work out their salvation through love for their Divine Saviour. And then as the love of Jesus manifests itself to the devout soul as a love despised and outraged, especially in the Eucharist, the love expressed in the devo-

tion naturally assumes a character of reparation, and elicits acts of atonement, the Communion of reparation, and compassion for Jesus suffering. The more one realizes the significance of this great devotion, the more firmly is he convinced that nothing can vie with it for making Jesus live in us, and for bringing him who lives by it to love God, in union with Jesus, with all his heart, all his soul, and all his strength, and to love his neighbor for the sake of the Redeemer.

The rapid spread of this devotion to the Sacred Heart throughout the Catholic world, which the last two centuries have witnessed, is sufficient proof that it has been the means of grace to many, and that it is well adapted to the needs of the hour. Moreover, no devotion has ever been so thoroughly tested by the bitter opposition with which it was received at first, and which it has survived so well; nor has any received more solemn approval of the Church than this devotion, which brings out in so special a manner the chief characteristic feature of Christianity, that it is pre-eminently a religion of love.

Adoration of the Eucharist

GEORGE O'NEILL, S.J.

From the Auckland "Month," August 21, 1928

"SIR, there is no idolatry in the Mass. They believe God to be really present, and they adore Him." So said Dr. Johnson to Boswell. Yes; Catholics believe that God—the person of Jesus Christ, God and man—becomes present at Mass under the species of bread and wine, and they adore Him as being thus present. I wish to stress this simple fact. There are in the world at present about 330,000,000 Catholics and nearly 100,000,000 members of the Orthodox Greek Church—all of one mind and usage, as regards adoration of the Eucharist. When, therefore, we find these manifold millions all lumped together as "idolators" by a representative of a dissenting Christian body, numbering all told about one-eleventh of that number, it becomes difficult for one of the millions to accept the description with unruffled meekness. Perhaps one may re-

ceive it with frivolity, and recall that old lady who thought the regiment was all marching out of step because no one was keeping step with her Johnny.

IN STEP WITH CHRISTENDOM

But there is more than this. Far back through the ages some sixty generations of Catholic adorers have marched in step unflinching with the 430,000,000 of today. From the time of Christ Himself, His Church, which He founded with promises of perpetuity and indefectibility, on which He sent down the Spirit of Truth "to teach you all truth," has recognized her Saviour and God under the Eucharistic species, and paid Him the reverence such a recognition called for. However forms might vary—in the silence and darkness of the Catacombs or in the blaze of a Papal High Mass, in the cautious "discipline of secrecy" or in the publicity of a modern Congress, she has looked upon her God in the Eucharist as no less worthy of adoration than amid the thunders of Sinai, the anguish of Calvary, or the revelations of the last Judgment. And for some 1500 years hardly any one of the slightest importance questioned the rightness of the adoration.

THE EARLY CHURCH

The Catholic note is struck at the outset. See St. Paul's reproof of the irreverent Corinthians. They were committing grievous sin, because they did not "discern the body" of the Lord.

St. Ignatius, a disciple of the Apostles, martyred under Trajan, complains of certain heretics: "They do not confess that the Eucharist is the Flesh of Our Saviour Jesus Christ—the flesh that suffered for our sins, and that the Father in His love raised from the dead."

In the second century, St. Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons and martyr, quotes Christ's words of Eucharistic consecration, and adds: "Thus did He teach the new sacrifice of the new covenant, which the Church, receiving from the Apostles, offers up to God all over the world."

A century later the illustrious Origen, though fond—over-fond—of allegorical interpretations, yet insists often on the literal acceptance of Christ's Eucharistic words. He

gives what we might call rubrics for Holy Communion. "Preserve the Body of the Lord with all care and veneration. You will rightly feel guilty in any portion of it falls to the ground, or is lost."

A martyr to such care and veneration was the acolyte Tarcisius whom Pope Damasus (d. 384) commemorated in an epitaph. This pious boy suffered martyrdom at the hands of pagans rather than betray to their curiosity the Sacred Host entrusted to his care.

In the fourth century, St. Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem, published treatises on Christian doctrine, that were, and have since been regarded as wells of truth and undefiled. He says much on the Real Presence. This, for example: "What seems bread is not bread, although it is sensible to taste, but is the Body of Christ; and what seems wine is not wine, although it seems so to the taste, but is the Blood of Christ." Very plain language, is it not?

There are four or five Fathers—I can give the exact references—who expressly anticipate Zwinglius and Calvin, by saying that Christ did not institute a type or figure, but said: "This is My Body; this is My Blood," and meant just what He said.

THE EUCHARISTIC DOCTOR

St. John Chrysostom, the "golden-mouthed" expositor, has been called "the Eucharistic Doctor," because of the frequency and devout warmth of his references to Christ in the Eucharist. Lack of space compels me to pass over other theologians of the East. Let us turn for a moment to the West, and quote from two very great men. St. Ambrose insists on the literal acceptance of Christ's words, whatever miracle they may involve; for they are plain, and He is omnipotent. "What shall we say of the Divine consecration in which the words of the Saviour Himself are operative? The Sacrament you receive is made by the word of Christ. . . . If the word of Elias had power to bring fire from heaven will not the word of Christ avail to give one element the appearance of another? If the Word of Christ had power to make something out of nothing, cannot that Word change what is into something different?" Then St. Augustine. In two places, he puts before us the Eucharistic miracle with a simplicity which minimizers and modernists would call "crude." Comment-

ing on the next text, "He was borne in His own hands." (I Kings, xxi, 1; Septuag.), he says: "This seeming impossibility we find accomplished in Christ. For when, commending His Body to His Apostles, He said: 'This is My Body,' then Christ was borne in His own hands; because He was bearing that Body in His hands." Would the saint have called the Apostles idolators for adoring it?

To pursue the history of the Church's recognition of the Real Presence on through the ages—from Augustine to Chrysostom, to the theologians and saints of the sixteenth century, or of our own time—would be a fruitless task; the facts are too patent. Unanimously—up to 400 years ago, when discordant voices raised opposition—the Christian peoples adored the Eucharist and found in its worship the sweetest of comforts, the most elevating of inspirations, the very heart of religious life, the impulse to that efflorescence of sacred art that glorified alike the vast cathedral, the village church, and the convent chapel.

THE GREATEST OF CENTURIES

The thirteenth century has been hailed by such historians as Bishop Creighton as the greatest of human epochs. It was also the most Eucharistic. Then kings and cities vied with each other in erecting such shrines for the Eucharistic Lord as that Sainte Chapelle in Paris—the wonder and despair of posterity. Then arose a St. Thomas Aquinas—the greatest synthetic mind since Aristotle, and the enthusiastic lyrist of the Blessed Sacrament. Then arose a Louis IX—just and saintly King, of whom there was current a story we should like to retell. It may be doubtfully authenticated, but it well reflects the mind of the king and of his times. A priest was celebrating Mass in the palace, and after the Consecration there appeared to the eyes of some persons present the figure of a beautiful child on the altar. One ran to tell the holy king of the marvel. He answered: "Let those hasten to see whose faith is wavering; as for me, I have no need to see."

THE GREATEST SONS OF MEN

An idolator? Saints, philosophers, kings, men of learning, men who knew the Scriptures by heart (there were

such), men of action, men of genius—all, all, idolators? Francis of Assisi and Francis Xavier, missionaries and martyrs, Pascal, Descartes, Corneille and Racine; Thomas More, Columbus, da Vinci and Michelangelo; Chaucer, Dryden, Pope, Newman, Lingard, all those University converts, Belloc, Chesterton, I seize on names at haphazard—with the million millions in the background, back to the days of Christ—all idolators?

Edmund Burke said: "I know no method of drawing up an indictment against a whole nation." But even a Burkian imagination might feel staggered by the comprehensiveness of the excommunication pronounced by certain non-Catholic organizations in recent months.

Peace and Catholic Unity

JOSEPH F. THORNING, S.J.

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THE recent meeting of the Catholic Association for International Peace at the Catholic University of America, April 2 and 3, afforded another example of that unity which Christ promised His Church. Alone of groups claiming to be Christian, the Catholic Church does not have to seek for unity; she has it. On few occasions is this more noticeable than when Catholics gather to discuss world problems or to confer on ways and means to promote the practice of justice and charity in the reciprocal dealings of nations.

Nor is the reason for this at all remote. The Church is, in name and fact, an international society. If it may be said that the sun never sets on the British flag, how much more true is it that Catholicism knows no frontiers and, unlike the British Empire, unites men of every race, condition and temperament not only as "brothers under the skin," but also as members of the same Mystical Body of Christ.

This, from the start, marks off the Catholic Association for International Peace from every other organization, religious or secular, which aims to promote peace among the nations. Other peace societies, it is true, may exhibit on

their letterheads members representing various quarters of the globe, but this universality, like every mere gesture toward union, is only on the surface, lacking the inner bond which links soul to soul in the partaking of the same Sacraments, the acknowledgment of the one Revelation, and submission to the same spiritual head. It is this which makes International Catholic Action of special significance and value. That institution alone can give world-wide unity and solidarity which already has it.

It is not surprising, then, that the note of Catholic unity was sounded again and again in the course of the recent conference. One of the first suggestions which met with unanimous approval was that more stress be laid on the international origin of the Association which, it should not be forgotten, sprang out of the union of Catholics coming from all parts of the world to honor their Eucharistic King at Chicago in June, 1926. More attention, it is expected, will be directed to this feature of the Association's history.

Quite consistently, the origin, progress and policy of Catholic peace movements in Europe were in the foreground throughout the conference. At the luncheon meeting, April 2, Miss Elizabeth B. Sweeney, Miss Anna Dill Gamble, Mr. Michael Francis Doyle, and the Rev. Gregory Feige, related the salient facts concerning the Catholic Council for International Relations at London, the Catholic Union for International Studies, the *Cercle Catholique de Genève*, and the German Catholic Union for Peace. Members of the American Association found much matter for inspiration in the activities of their brethren abroad, resolving to delay no longer in carrying out that provision of their Constitution which calls for cooperation with similar Catholic organizations in other countries. Initial attempts will concern themselves with establishing closer contacts with Catholic students in collegiate and university circles. There has been much concerted effort in this line among Catholic students of the various European countries.

The fundamental reason for Catholic unity in the promotion of peace received detailed and specific treatment from Mr. D. L. Maynard Gray in his paper entitled "The Popes and Peace." No important Papal utterance was omitted from this summary, and the whole was shown to comprise a compact, absolutely consistent body of authori-

tative teaching on the subject. The actual operation of Catholic peace principles as applied by the Sovereign Pontiffs in the settlement of disputes by mediation and arbitration was described by the Rev. Charles C. Miltner, C.S.C., in "The Church and Peace Efforts." In the discussion which followed, mention was made of the new international status of the Vatican and its implications with respect to the Holy Father's opportunities to continue his work for peace. Both the aforementioned papers were prepared under the general direction of the Historical Committee.

For the Europe Committee Dr. W. M. T. Gamble elaborated a report on "The Newer Attitudes on Peace." According to the view expressed in Dr. Gamble's paper, the first Hague Conference marked a new orientation of mind with respect to the conduct of world affairs.

Although the Association rigidly adheres to its determination not to invade the realm of political controversy, it has no hesitation in hearing factual reports on various organized efforts which aim to give the world a measure of security. Consequently objective, impartial statements by Miss Marie Carroll, Mr. Michael Francis Doyle, and the Rev. Thomas F. Divine, S.J., were heard on "The League of Nations," "American Cooperation with the League in its Ninth Year," and on "The World Economic Conference."

With this factual background the members of the Association were well qualified to discuss the ethical and legal aspects of "Security and Disarmament," by the Rev. Joseph F. Thorning, S.J., and "Neutrality Laws," by Dr. Charles G. Fenwick. The "freedom of the seas" and the Monroe Doctrine were discussed in this connection.

The report of the Asia Committee, given by the Chairman, Mr. William Franklin Sands, dwelt on the difference between Western and Eastern civilizations. That on Agricultural and International Relations was presented by the Rev. Francis J. Haas, later elected President of the Association. Dr. John M. Cooper then recounted the meager findings of the Peace Education Committee, which has investigated peace instruction in Catholic primary schools.

Progress on current work of the Committees on International Ethics, Relations with Latin America, International

Law and Organization, United States Dependencies, and Economic Relations, was described in turn by the Rev. Dr. John A. Ryan, the Rev. R. A. McGowan, Dr. Herbert F. Wright, Miss Elizabeth M. Lynskey, and Dr. Parker T. Moon.

The conference reached its climax in the powerful denunciation of war policy by the Hon. David I. Walsh, United States Senator from Massachusetts. In a clear, vigorous style Senator Walsh distinguished between "the great public virtue of peace" and "specific means or instruments to secure its establishment." Declaring that the common people of the world long for peace and never want war, he laid the responsibility for armed strife at the door of scheming, nationalistic, imperialistic statesmen who exploit the masses in order to satisfy personal ambition and accomplish their own selfish designs. The Senator instanced the splendid solidarity of Catholics as a great potential asset for the peaceful settlement of disputes by conciliation or arbitration and expressed the hope that the Catholic Association for International Peace would receive fresh accessions from among Catholics throughout the United States. It was also his view that the Holy Name Society, the mission societies, and the Sodalties of the Blessed Virgin might be enlisted in the cause. His first and last words were of encouragement and congratulation, inspired by the gratification he felt that there should exist a Catholic organization whose formal object was peace. The Kellogg Peace Pact, according to Senator Walsh, is simply a promise not to resolve differences by force and this promise should be regarded as sacred as any made among individuals and as significant as the plighted word of conscientious men and women.

The retiring President of the Association became an *ex-officio* member of the Executive Committee, while the Rt. Rev. Msgr. James H. Ryan, D.D., Rector of the Catholic University of America, was invited to serve as Honorary President. The new President, Dr. Francis J. Haas, of St. Francis Seminary and Marquette University, called on the membership generously to share the burdens of the work undertaken by the Association. Two new Vice-Presidents were elected, the Rt. Rev. Aurelius Stehle, O.S.B., and Miss Marie J. Carroll, of the World Peace Foundation.

At a meeting of the Executive Committee a thorough

reorganization of committees was undertaken. Particular care was devoted to correlating the work of the various groups and several new appointments recommended. A new Committee on International Understanding was formed under the Chairmanship of the Rev. John M. Cooper, while the Chairmanship of the Peace Education Committee was proffered to Dr. George Johnson, Director of the N. C. W. C. Department of Education. Considerable field work was projected, starting with Catholic institutions of higher learning and including high schools, colleges and universities. In this way students will be introduced to the valuable matter contained in the published reports of the Committee on International Ethics and of the Committee on Latin America. Cooperation with Catholic students in other lands will naturally follow.

It is not an exaggeration to say that the cause of Catholic unity received fresh impetus from the third annual meeting of the Catholic Association for International Peace.